



Governor's Task Force
On the Humane Treatment of Animals

Meeting Minutes for June 14, 2006

The following people were present:

Senator Sheila Roberge,	Representative Nancy Johnson,	
Roni McCall,	Mel Liston	Steve Sprowl
Sheila Presby	Lisa Hall	George Cook
Maureen Prendergast	Susan Morrell	Steve Crawford
Joanne Bourbeau	Cassandra Gatsas	Dick Wentzell
Stephanie Frommer	Russell Pope	Michael Hughes
Jennifer Beaulieu	Jeri Zezula	Russell Pope
Patrick Murphy Aide to Senator Roberge		

- Senator Roberge opened the meeting at 2:04pm
- Introduced New members of the Taskforce

- Revisions to last months minutes:

Brian Whipple's case in Jaffrey of the drowning of an unwanted litter by a farmer - the case was a misdemeanor case.

A copy of the Safe Haven list prepared by Joanne Bourbeau should be included with the minutes.

- Revisions to the 3 subcommittees are as follows:

Education:	Funding:	Improving Laws:
Joanne Bourbeau	Sheila Presby	Mike Hughes
Joyce Matott	Lisa Hall	Russ Pope
Elin Phinizy	Cassandra Gatsas	Peter Marsh
Maureen Prendergast	Ken Murphy	Steve Crawford
	Mel Liston	Jeri Zezula
		Steve Sprowl

George Cook
Roni McCall

- Representative Nancy Johnson, Jeri Zezula and Roni McCall will be the subcommittee members working on setting up and/or input to the task force website.
- The subcommittee's chairs gave a brief report of their committee's progress. Dick Wentzell began for Funding with the idea of setting up 10 cents per 100,000 on the transfer stamp of the sale of real estate. Suggested a bill be established in the senate for the funding of a dedicated funding but that the funding be administrated by a non-profit rather than government. The subcommittee is also looking into finding someone who can write a grant and advice on setting up a non-profit.
- The taskforce members suggested that Funding come up with an alternative plan and not focus entirely on this one funding idea because it is possible the bill would not pass in the House or Senate.
- Dr. Zezula's spoke for the Education subcommittee. The one of the goals of the committee is to educate the public about animal cruelty. That animal cruelty should be in the public eye not just when a big case hits in NH that everyone eventually forgets.
- The committee will also work on Programs for Children, getting the Dept of Education involved state wide. It was suggested that the school teachers include in their curriculum teaching children about animal cruelty in the classroom. Perhaps this might be mandated. In closing the committee will be working on PSA's and press releases on issues rather than specific cases. Asking if anyone has any "ins" with TV stations and to let the committee know about contact people.
- Joanne Bourbeau suggested an in-service for the taskforce. The consensus was that it should be on the agenda for a future meeting, perhaps a 2 hour in-service to the taskforce.

- Mel Liston suggested contacting Pet Companies and Feed Companies for possible advertising.
- The taskforce suggested we should get input from the Animal Fighting Taskforce as to their progress and that every social services and animal shelter be made aware of Safe Houses for Animals to help with families having to relocate when a domestic abuse situation happens.
- Peter Marsh spoke as Chair for the Recodification of the laws subcommittee. The meeting began with a discussion on about existing laws and that over the last few years the RSA's are being revised and clarified. The main problem is enforcing the laws. One of the goals of this subcommittee will be to educate both professionals and the committee about animal cruelty.
- The taskforce then began a discussion and updating the new members about some of the previous agenda's
 1. funding, such as a tax on pet foods or products, suggested line item in the State Veterinarians budget, dedicated fund problems, tax proposals to support funding etc.
 2. prosecuting cases fostering, vet care, dedicated facilities to take abused animals and that the state has only 3 licensed cruelty investigators with powers to arrest an abuser.
 3. education issues, that ACO's go to the Police Academy but there are no courses specifically covering animal cruelty.
 4. recapped about the survey's the taskforce sent out to Domestic Violence Shelters, Police Departments etc.
 5. about the spay neuter fund and that dog licensing currently funds it. The issue of possibly licensing cats and how it was defeated in California because of the feral cat problems. The pro's/cons of horses be included in licensing etc. How commercial kennel licenses get a break if they breed more than 10 dogs and sell more than 50 pups a year.
- The discussion then went onto a recap by Joanne Bourbeau about Maine's animal protection order for the new people.

- Cassandra Gatsas reported that Rhode Island now requires cat owners to spay neuter their pets. That RI's new statute includes funding for a spay/neuter program.
- The discussion then went on to see if we could get a line item in the Governor's budget for some funds for the taskforce and that we have 6 months to come up with something before the next budget period is addressed.
- Dick Wentzell brought up a recent case of 46 German Shepherds that moved into Newport. Dr. Crawford was asked to clarify what is necessary to have dogs confiscated. The shepherds are costing \$20,000 a month to care for 33 of the dogs. This case has psychological issues (hoarding) - it was suggested that should the case go to conviction that mandatory psychological counseling be part of the terms of sentencing. Susan Morrell pointed out that the law does allow for a 48 hour hold if the person is a danger to himself or others but it does not classify others as animals.

Dr. Zezula presented to the taskforce 3 courses being offered at UNH that might be of interest:

1. AAS 219 Animal Cruelty: NH Laws, Investigations and Prosecution an online course, available this Fall
2. A Community Approach to Dangerous Dogs on July 18, 2006
3. Ritual Crime and the Occult on July 20, 2006

The course information is available at <http://www.unh.edu/neacha>

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

- The next taskforce meeting is July 12th at 2pm. The Subcommittees will meet at 1pm before the taskforce meeting. The meetings will be held in LOB307 for the next 2 months.

Minutes submitted by Roni McCall, Through Their Eyes, The National Animal Abuse Registry.